

REMARKS

The Examiner objected to the claim numbering as being not in accordance with 37 C.F.R. 1.126 because claim numbering went from 21 to 23 and then to 22 and 23. The Examiner amended the specification to address this objection. The Applicants thank the Examiner for correcting this typographical error.

The Examiner rejected claims 24-25 under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which the Applicants regard as their invention because claims 24 and 25 specify the time of contact with the polymeric material implying that they are only in contact for the specified time, rather than indefinitely or permanently.

The Applicants amended claims 24 and 25 as the Examiner suggested to reflect that step C) is carried out by applying pressure for the specified time periods. Support for this amendment may be found at paragraph [0018]. For the above reasons, the Applicants believe that they have particularly pointed out and distinctly claimed the subject matter that they regard as their invention. Therefore, Applicants request that the Examiner withdraw the rejection of claims 24 and 25 under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, and allow the claims to issue.

The Examiner rejected claims 1, 4, 11-13, 15, 22-23, and 30 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) over U.S. Patent 5,019,210 to Chou, *et al.* (Chou) because Chou discloses a method for enhancing the adhesion of polymer surfaces by water vapor plasma treatment wherein the surfaces of first and second fully cured polymeric bodies are treated with water vapor and thereafter the treated surfaces are disposed together and adhered together. The Examiner further argues that Chou further discloses that the polymer surfaces may be polyimide and the adherend can be a substrate. Chou further discloses aging the plasma treated polymer surfaces before contacting them and the Examiner argues that this is the same as storing the plasma treated polymer surfaces.

Claims 1 and 30 have been canceled. Claims 4, 11-13, and 22-23 have each been amended to depend on claim 27. Claim 15 depends on claim 13. Therefore, the Applicants request that the Examiner withdraw the rejection of claims 1, 4, 11-13, 15, 22-23, and 30 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) and allow the claims to issue.

The Examiner rejected claims 2-10, 16-21, 24-25, 28, and 35-36 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Chou for the same reasons discussed above for claims 13, 15, 22, 23, and 30.

The Applicants respectfully request clarification of the office action at page 5, which indicates claims 35 and 36 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) and page 8, which indicates claim 35 is allowed and claims 36 and 37 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a). The Applicants believe that due to the initial misnumbering of the claims that perhaps a typographical error was made at page 5 of the office action, therefore, the Applicants have interpreted the office action according to page 8, which states a rejection of claims 36 and 37 and allowance of claim 35. Claims 2-5, 7-8, 16, 18, 20-21, 24-25 have been amended to depend on claim 27. Claim 6 depends on claim 5. Claim 9 depends on claim 8. Claim 10 depends on claim 9. Claim 17 depends on claim 16. Claim 19 has been canceled. Claims 28, 36, and 37 have been canceled. Therefore, the present invention is not obvious over Chou because the amendments render the rejection moot. The Applicants request that the Examiner withdraw rejection of claims 2-10, 16-21, 24-25, 28, and 36-37 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) and allow the claims to issue.

The Examiner objected to claim 14 as being dependent upon a rejected base claim. The Examiner indicated that claim 14 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form to include all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. The Applicants amended claim 14 as the Examiner suggested to include the limitations of the base claim (1) and the intervening claim (13). Therefore, the Applicants respectfully request that the objection to claim 14 be withdrawn because the amendment renders the objection moot.

The Examiner allowed claims 26, 27, 29, and 31-35. The Applicants amended claims 2-5, 7-8, 11-13, 16, 18, and 20-25 each to depend on claim 27. Claim 6 depends on claim 5. Claim 9 depends on claim 8, and claim 10 depends on claim 9. Claim 15 depends on claim 13. Claim 17 depends on claim 16. Therefore, the Applicants respectfully request allowance of claims 2-13, 15-18, and 20-25 because the amendments to the claim dependencies place these claims in proper form for allowance.

The Applicants have particularly pointed out and distinctly claimed the subject matter that they regard as their invention, and the instant invention is novel and unobvious. Reconsideration of the application is requested.

The present reply is being submitted within the three month period for response to the outstanding office action. Although the Applicants believe in good faith that no extensions of time are needed, the Applicants hereby petition for any necessary extensions of time. You are authorized to charge deposit account 04-1520 for any fees necessary to maintain the pendency of this application. You are authorized to make any additional copies of this sheet needed to accomplish the purposes provided for herein and to charge any fee for such copies to deposit account 04-1520.

Respectfully Submitted,
DOW CORNING CORPORATION

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Catherine U. Brown". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above a horizontal line.

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